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SUBJECT: PHILIPPINES LAUDS SIX PARTY TALKS OUTCOME

REF: STATE 18387

¶1. (U) After Pol/C conveyed reftel points to Assistant Secretary of Foreign Affairs for Asia and the Pacific Romeo

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Manalo on February 14, Foreign Secretary Alberto G. Romulo issued the following statement;

quote

We join the international community in welcoming the Six-Party agreement in Beijing on 13 February 2007 which is an important first step towards a denuclearized Korean Peninsula and augurs well for a more stable and secure Asia. We welcome the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's agreement to shut down and seal its main nuclear reactor at Yongbyon, list all its nuclear programs, and dismantle all other nuclear facilities in exchange for energy, economic, and humanitarian assistance.

The international community has finally seen a concrete result ensuing from the Six-Party Talks. We commend the heads of delegations of the People's Republic of China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, and the United States of America for having demonstrated the strength and unwavering resolve to engage North Korea in the diplomatic arena for the cause of peace and stability in the Korean Peninsula.

We believe that the agreements are most critical steps toward the implementation of the September 19, 2005 Agreement, which calls for a denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, and the eventual return of the entire Northeast Asia region to the non-proliferation regime.

As we look forward to the normalization of relations between the key players in the region, the Philippines will support and contribute to all efforts by the international community in ensuring that the agreements reached are substantially and properly complied with by all parties.

end quote.

¶2. (U) President Arroyo also publicly praised the outcome, although the full text of her comments were not available as of COB. According to press reports, she commented that "As chair of ASEAN, I wish to convey my congratulations to the nations that negotiated a landmark agreement leading to the de-escalation of nuclear arms development in North Korea." She added that the agreement was a "good start" toward full disarmament and the full stabilization of the Korean peninsula. She underscored that "the Philippines and ASEAN will continue to extend all support to achieve these aims through peaceful and constructive means," noting that "the Philippines is a strong player in world security, stability,

and harmony."

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